

Senate Asks Information On Spy Ships

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The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is conducting an inquiry into the entire network of American electronic intelligence ships such as the USS Pueblo and whether their operations compromise U.S. foreign policy.

Committee chairman J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) on Friday sent a four-page questionnaire to Secretary of State Dean Rusk raising both questions and doubts about the need for close-in surveillance of North Korea, China and North Vietnam.

The Arkansas Democrat signed the letter and said it was sent "on behalf of individual members" of the Foreign Relations Committee. Copies went to all committee members.

These ships, it is understood from congressional sources, not only monitored mainland radio communications but also were equipped to track mainland missile shots and record atomic and hydrogen bomb tests.

The varied tasks required ships, known as "elints," (for electronic intelligence ship) to come as close to the shoreline as possible. In its letter to Secretary Rusk the committee asked why it was necessary to send a ship so close to the territorial waters of another state.

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ly, the letter stated, "what dividend in intelligence data is gained from holding a ship at 13 nautical miles off a coastline as opposed to say 25 to 30 miles?"

The Committee then asked: "Couldn't this information be collected by aircraft or satellite?"

A State Department aide said yesterday that, barring a public incident such as the Pueblo's seizure, it is almost impossible to get intelligence operations stopped once they have been undertaken. "Any technical information gives enormous comfort to the intelligence community," he suggested, and "without a disaster, it's difficult for non-technical reviewers to say no to any operation."

The Committee also asked Rusk to provide a complete description of "the intelligence collection plan which included use of the Pueblo and other vessels." It also posed these questions: "... when was it approved? ... Who participated in the decisions? Did the missions vary from area to area?"

"What was the name of the highest official in the U.S. Government," the Committee asked, "who is aware of day-to-day operations of such ships as the Pueblo?"

The Committee noted that it had an understanding that the North Korean representative to the Korean Armistice Commission had "about January 20 ... warned the U.S. Representative about such activities as the Pueblo's mission." Asked the Committee:

"Was that information made available to the Department of State? At what time?"

Other questions were: Was the Pueblo the first U.S. intelligence ship to go in waters off North Korea? Who decided to send it? Was it flying a U.S. flag throughout its mission? What roles in the mission were played by the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency and the Navy?

The committee asked for copies of all "instructions" and "mission concepts" relating to the Pueblo as well as communications sent to and received from that ship.

It asked for intercepted North Korean messages before, during and 48 hours after the attack on the Pueblo.

As to the U.S. response to the Pueblo incident, the Committee asked for details on what aircraft were available in the area to respond, and which military commanders made the decision not to send aid?

[A committee spokesman said yesterday that Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara has agreed to meet with the Committee in executive session Feb. 20 to review the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident, Associated Press reported.]

UPI-56

(SPY SHIPS)

WASHINGTON--THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE HAS ASKED SECRETARY OF STATE DEAN RUSK FOR A "FULL DESCRIPTION" OF AMERICA'S NETWORK OF INTELLIGENCE SHIPS LIKE THE USS PUEBLO, INCLUDING DETAILS ON OPERATIONS AND EQUIPMENT OF THE SEIZED VESSEL.

THE SWEEPING INQUIRY WAS SUMMARIZED IN A FOUR-PAGE QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO RUSK BY CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT, D-ARK., ON BEHALF OF HIS COMMITTEE. COPIES WENT TO ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT S. MCNAMARA HAS AGREED TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE LATER THIS MONTH TO REPORT ON THE PUEBLO INCIDENT. BUT FULBRIGHT'S LETTER WENT BEYOND THE PUEBLO MATTER, ASKING FOR A "COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION PLAN" ALSO INVOLVING OTHER VESSELS, THE NAME OF THE "HIGHEST OFFICIAL" AWARE OF DAY-TO-DAY SPY SHIP ACTIVITIES, AND QUESTIONING THE NEED FOR SENDING SUCH SHIPS AS CLOSE AS 13 NAUTICAL MILES TO THE COAST LINE OF ANOTHER COUNTRY.

THE LETTER ASKED WHAT AGENCIES HAVE "OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY" FOR THE PUEBLO -- SPECIFICALLY WHETHER THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY HAS OVERALL CONTROL AND "WHAT IS THE CIA'S ROLE?" IT REQUESTED COPIES OF "ALL OPERATIONAL INSTRUCTIONS AND MISSION CONCEPTS RELATING TO THE PEOPLE," COPIES OF RADIO MESSAGES OF NORTH KOREA PRIOR TO THE ATTACK ON THE PUEBLO RELATING TO U.S. OR SOUTH KOREAN "HARASSMENTS OR ATTACKS AGAINST NORTH KOREA" AND EXPLANATION OF WHY THE PUEBLO DID NOT HAVE HEAVIER WEAPONS OR A MILITARY ESCORT.

AMONG OTHER THINGS IT CALLED FOR A "FULL DESCRIPTION OF ALL INTELLIGENCE EQUIPMENT ABOARD THE PUEBLO AND AN ESTIMATE OF HOW MUCH WAS CAPTURED."

IN CONCLUSION THE INQUIRY ASKED "DOES THE ADMINISTRATION BELIEVE WE HAVE THE MEN AND THE EQUIPMENT TO HANDLE ANOTHER GROUND WAR ON THE MAINLAND OF ASIA WITHOUT THE USE OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS?" IT ADDED:

"IF SO, ON WHAT DO WE BASE THIS ESTIMATE GIVEN THE PRESENT DEPLOYMENT AND COMMITMENT OF OUR FORCES?"

"IF WE DO NOT INTEND TO USE TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN ANY GROUND WAR IN KOREA, SHOULD WE NOT START PROMPTLY TO TAKE STEPS TO REDUCE OUR COMMITMENTS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD?"

FULBRIGHT'S LETTER SAID THERE MAY BE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS AT A LATER TIME. HIS LETTER CONTAINED 20 CATEGORIES OF QUESTIONS, SOME EMBRACING HALF A DOZEN SPECIFIC INQUIRIES.

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